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ABSTRACT

Classroom observation of 28 third-grade teachers illustrated the management and planning strategies that differentiate effective teachers from less effective teachers. Effective managers communicated a workable system of rules and procedures, monitored students carefully, and were consistent in treating inappropriate behavior. Less effective managers did not establish their credibility at the outset of the academic year and were unpredictable in both their feedback and discipline techniques. Discipline and organizational procedures were delineated during the first weeks of the school year by the more effective teachers. (LH)

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The First Weeks of Class . . .

and the Rest of the Year

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Footnote

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Abstract

A year-long study of 28 third-grade teachers yielded extensive and rich narrative data describing their management practices from the beginning of the year. The seven most effective and seven least effective teachers were compared to determine what dimensions of management discriminated between them. Analyses are still in progress, and this paper presents some working hypotheses about the differences between the two groups of teachers. Teacher behaviors are examined for the information that was conveyed to students about the purposes of cooperative behavior and how to behave in the classroom. In addition, the teachers' skills at diagnosing students' needs for information and immediate concerns are discussed. The latter is related to the teachers' abilities to manipulate the "signal systems" of activities and maintain the students' attention.

The influence of initial teaching activities upon the remainder of the year has long been assumed by educators, and is a part of the folk lore of teaching. For example, Waller (1932) observed, "It is axiomatic among school men that the first day of school, or the first meeting of a class, is all-important in determining the success or failure of the school year." (p. 301). And Bagley (1907), in a book on management, gave considerable coverage to initial activities, including a series of prescriptive statements for the first day.

Nevertheless, research on teaching typically has obtained cross-sectional samples of behavior at some point after the school year has begun, without observing classroom processes at the beginning of the year. In the area of classroom organization and management, in particular, the initial phase of the year should be of paramount importance. The teacher, generally with no prior history of contacts with the pupils, becomes their instructional leader and a primary reinforcing and punishing agent. The students are organized into formal instructional groups, and they begin to form or re-form informal groups as well. Work assignments are made and students begin to receive feedback about their performances. They also learn about the teacher's expectations for their behavior in various contexts, and the consistency with which the teacher delivers the consequences of complying with or deviating from the expectations. These, and numerous other processes, are initiated during the first several weeks of a school year. Within a short period of time some classrooms are a symphony of behavior, with procedures, activities, and children harmoniously arranged. In other cases, the results are more discordant. Students are more frequently off-task; lessons are poorly developed; the flow of activities is not smooth, and teachers must spend too

much time reacting to inappropriate student behavior and reestablishing control and order periodically.

How to begin the year is a question that all teachers have considered. A major goal of this project was to identify how teachers who are effective managers begin the year and to determine what basic principles of management underlie the activities and strategies used by the effective managers. In addition to improving our understanding of classroom management processes, such research has obvious implications for pre- and in-service teacher preparation.

This paper presents some results of a year-long study of a group of teachers; the emphasis in this paper is on descriptive data from the first three weeks of the year. A more comprehensive report of the findings, including other measures of teaching behavior, will be produced when data analyses have been completed.

Methods

In order to study the initial phases of classroom organization and management, it is necessary to be in classrooms when school begins. Consequently, 29 third-grade teachers* in eight elementary schools were recruited into the study. Only a few of the teachers in the eight schools chose not to participate; generally, the nonparticipants were new teachers. However, the final sample did include six first-year teachers. Four of the eight schools were Title I schools, the remaining four were "near" Title I schools. The ethnic/racial composition of pupil populations in five of the

*Initially, all the teachers were to have taught third-grade classes, but two teachers were shifted, one to a second grade class and one to a fourth grade class, shortly after the school year began. They were left in the final sample. Two other teachers who were observed during the first three weeks took leaves-of-absence during the first half of the school year; data from their observations are not included here.

schools was mixed; in one other school most of the children were Black; in the two remaining schools most of the children were Mexican-American.

Observers were trained to gather several types of information. The chief source of information about organization and management practices was the Classroom Narrative Record, consisting of specimen records written by the observer during each classroom visit. Each observer was to record, in narrative form, as much information as possible about observed classroom processes. Guidelines for observers focused them on many classroom processes and characteristics including room arrangement, materials, assignments, introductions, classroom rules, consequences of misbehavior, initiation of activities, transitions, delays, student reactions, grouping patterns, the nature of individual work and organizational procedures, desired student activities, problems, response to inappropriate behavior, consistency of the teacher's response, how students reacted, systems for contacting students, procedures for various teacher and pupil activities, the nature of group work, monitoring, feedback systems, reward and punishment systems, and teacher cues. These aspects were incorporated into a list of 61 questions which observers were asked to address in their narratives. Observers recorded their written narratives onto a form that also allowed the recording of the class activity, grouping, and content format at all stages of the narrative.

Another source of information about classroom processes was the Student Engagement Rating (SER). At 15-minute intervals the observer counted the number of students who were on-task or off-task, and noted the subject and activity. A Component Check List made up of a series of 34 ratings or checklist items was used at the end of each observation to record observer judgments about particular aspects of the teacher's instruction or behavior management.

Observations were begun at 8 a.m. on the first day of school in 12 of the classrooms, and all teachers were observed for at least one half day during the first two days. During the first three weeks each teacher was observed on eight to ten occasions. Typically, a morning observation began at the start of the school day, and lasted until the beginning of the lunch break. An afternoon observation began after the lunch break, and continued until the close of the school day. A majority of the observations were made in the morning, but each teacher was observed several times in the afternoon. Each teacher was seen separately by two observers.

After the first three weeks, each teacher was interviewed. During the interview, which lasted approximately one hour, teachers responded to questions about planning, general organization and management, reading instruction and organization, problems or constraints, and several other aspects of their classroom.

Observations were resumed in November, but on a reduced scale. For the remainder of the year, each teacher was observed once every three weeks, by observers different from those who observed the teacher during the initial three weeks. At the end of the school year, observers made a number of summary ratings of selected teacher characteristics and of other instructional variables. Teachers were interviewed again in order to acquire information about arithmetic instruction, special problem students, reflections about the year's events, and what changes, if any, the teachers might make during the coming year.

Narrative Summaries

Much of the information about the teachers' organization and management was in narrative form. Although this is a splendid source of case studies and anecdotes, it required reduction to a digest form, as well as conversion to

numerical scales in order to make comparisons between teacher groups, or to relate to the more objective data gathered in each classroom. Reduction was accomplished by separating the narratives into two sets: the initial three weeks' observations and the remainder of the year's observations. Three readers then wrote narrative summaries. The summaries were organized around areas that we believed, based upon prior research and our own observations, would describe important aspects of the classrooms. Each area was further divided into subparts, as shown in Figure 1. The readers worked together on several summaries until adequate agreement was reached on the nature of the information to include in the summaries. Narrative records were then assigned so that no reader was responsible for both the initial summary and remainder-of-year summary for a given teacher.

In addition to preparing a summary, each reader also rated the teacher's adequacy in each of the areas: leadership in controlling behavior, instructional management, meeting student concerns, physical arrangement, and constraints. The latter was given a dual rating: the severity of the constraints faced by the teacher, and the degree to which the teacher was able to cope with them. Initial checks among the readers indicated that these characteristics could be reliably rated based upon reading the narrative records. This provided some assurance that the narratives could be used to characterize the organizational and management behaviors of the teachers.

Preliminary Results

Among the questions that can be addressed with these data are 1) To what degree are the events of the remainder of the year predictable from the events of the first three weeks? or 2) What strategies and activities are used at the beginning of the year by the teachers who are more effective managers?

Two sources of data were used for the first question: the Student Engagement Ratings (SERs) and the ratings of major areas from the classroom narratives. Correlations between beginning-of-year scores and remainder-of-year scores are shown in Table 1 for on-task pupil behavior and for the teacher variables taken from the narrative records. The correlations are moderately high or high with the exception of Physical Arrangements. These correlations are not inflated by the systematic bias of single observers or readers because the narrative records were compiled by different observer pairs in the initial weeks and the remainder of the year, and the narrative ratings for the two sets of records were made by different readers. It should be noted however, that most of the variables are correlated, in some cases, very highly (Table 2). In particular, the high intercorrelations of Variables 1, 2, 3, and 6 suggest considerable interdependence. This may reflect that, for example, good behavioral managers are also good instructional managers and it may also reflect halo on the part of the readers. Thus, although we will continue to distinguish conceptually between these management domains, the reader should realize that they are undoubtedly linked.

The fact that management capability rated during the remainder of the year can be predicted from the beginning-of-the-year narratives indicates that we should be able to identify many of the antecedents of good year-long management practices by inspecting the data obtained in the first three weeks. To facilitate this search, two subsamples of teachers were selected for comparison.

Subsample Selection

The goal of the subsample selection procedure was to identify two groups of teachers with comparable classes, but who were highly differentiated

according to their management effectiveness during the year. A three step process was used.

Step 1. Using the CAT reading score obtained by each child in April of the preceding year, class mean CAT scores were computed. Classes were ranked and divided into three groups. Selection of subsamples was restricted so that each subsample would be balanced according to entering CAT mean.

Step 2. Within each CAT level, teachers were ranked on three management effectiveness criteria obtained during the remainder-of-year data collection: SER percent on-task (all activities), reader ratings using the average of the behavior control and instructional management variables, and a management factor score derived from observer end-of-year ratings.

Step 3. Class mean residual gain on CAT reading was computed, using scores obtained during April of the study year regressed onto the previous year's scores. Although these are by no means a perfect indicator of teacher effects (for example, in Title I schools, many pupils received reading instruction partly from their regular teacher and partly from a special teacher), they were used as a check on the selection procedure in Step 2. For obvious reasons, we wanted to avoid including as an example of more effective management practices, a teacher whose class achieved poorly or to include in the subsample of less effective managers a teacher whose class achieved well.

The final two groups were, therefore, clearly differentiated on remainder-of-year organization and management variables. The remaining data analyses consist of comparisons of the two groups according to their beginning-of-year activities and procedures.

Comparisons of More and Less Effective Managers

It was anticipated that the two groups of teachers would also have very different beginning-of-year management activities and behaviors, and this was

indeed the case. When the two group's means were contrasted on each of the narrative rating variables, significant differences were found on each, with the exception of "constraints" (cf. Table 3). Because a constraint is usually externally imposed (e.g., interruptions, new students, hall noise), the groups were not expected to differ on it.

Thus far, the data have been treated statistically, including correlations between beginning- and end-of-year ratings to verify predictability, and t-test contrasts to determine whether the two subgroups differed on several general management dimensions. At this point, our analysis will become more qualitative. We know that we have two very different groups of teachers, and we would like to describe how they differed in their beginning-of-year behavior. The remainder of the paper will contain descriptions which are derived chiefly from the narrative records and their summaries, although observer ratings of the teachers and the interviews were used to supplement the narratives.

Behavior Management

The two groups of teachers exhibited striking differences in initial behavior management activities. The differences were most apparent in the areas of classroom rules and procedures, monitoring of pupils, and the delivery of consequences.

Both groups of teachers had rules and procedures for their classes. What distinguished the more effective managers was the degree to which the rules and procedures were integrated into a workable system and how effectively the system was taught to the children. These teachers planned the first day so that they had maximum contact with and control over the children. Name tags and initial greetings were handled smoothly with no milling-about. Children had interesting activities to work on, usually by themselves, once they were

in their seats. Teachers stayed with the children, even when parents interrupted or the office called. As soon as most students had arrived, the teachers began describing rules and procedures. In some cases, pupils were asked to suggest rules, but not always. The rules and selected procedures were explained clearly, with examples and reasons. Not all procedures were discussed, only those which were needed for initial activities (e.g., bathroom, storage, pencil sharpener, water fountain). In other words, children were taught what they needed to know about using the room, but were not overloaded with information.

The better managers typically spent considerable time during the first week explaining and reminding students of the rules. Their pupils were not uniformly "ready" after the first day or two, and several of the teachers had relatively high amounts of off-task behavior initially. However, they taught the pupils to behave appropriately, through a variety of means. Some teachers used rehearsal of procedures, such as lining up. Other teachers used incentive systems to shape behavior. Most of the teachers taught the children to respond to specific signals, such as a bell or the teacher's call for attention.

When the first "academic" activity was introduced, it was a simple, enjoyable one, such as drawing and coloring. The teacher did not attempt to group children, nor was there any hurry to get into workbooks or readers. The teacher stayed with the total class, monitored them closely, and gave them clear, specific directions. This mode of instruction continued for several days, usually. The teachers primarily worked with the total group, monitored closely, and introduced procedures and content gradually. If the teacher did individual assessment or had to leave the total group to perform a clerical or procedural task, there was always a specific assignment and the teacher

continued to monitor their activities. If inappropriate behavior occurred, it was stopped quickly. The teacher's manner was most often businesslike, seldom harsh, usually warm.

These teachers clearly established themselves as the classroom leaders. They continued to work on rules and procedures until the children learned them. The teaching of content was important for these teachers, but they stressed, initially, socialization into the classroom system. By the end of the first three weeks, these classes were ready for the rest of the year.

In contrast to the more effective managers, the poorer managers did not have well worked out procedures. This was most evident in the behavior of the beginning teachers. For example, one new teacher had no procedures for using the bathroom, pencil sharpener, or the water fountain; the children seemed to come and go as they pleased. Consequently, children wandered about, enormously complicating the teacher's organizational tasks. Another new teacher rehearsed lining up and exiting for fire drills on the first day! An experienced teacher tried to use a bell as a signal, but allowed children to ignore it frequently. Another one tried instituting a system in which one bell ring meant the children should stop talking and two rings meant "pay attention." Unfortunately the teacher merely explained the system, without rehearsing it. Furthermore, she added the "two rings" signal before the children had learned to respond correctly to one ring. In short, some of the poor managers had not thought through very clearly the essential procedures to teach the children on the first days of school.

All of the poorer managers had rules, as did the better managers. However, there was a great difference in the way these were presented and followed up. In some cases the rules were vague ("Be in the right place at the right time.") and then not clarified. In other instances they were

introduced casually, at odd moments, without discussion. In other cases, rules are presented once, and then not mentioned again, as though a single presentation to a class of third graders would be perfectly comprehended and retained. Thus, the teachers did not use rules as cues for appropriate behavior, and they did not teach the rules to the children.

The poorer managers were also ineffective monitors of their classes. In some cases, this was caused, in part, by their not having efficient procedures for routine pupil activities. When children are wandering around a room, it is difficult to keep tabs on all of them. In addition, however, many of these teachers simply busied themselves in some clerical task or ancillary activity early in the first week. For example, some teachers removed themselves from active surveillance of the whole class to work with a single child on an individual reading assessment. Some teachers left their rooms during the first day or two to get materials, go to the office, etc. One teacher left her pupils three times during the first hour of the first day. A major consequence of the combination of vague or untaught rules and procedures and poor monitoring was that the children were frequently without enough information to guide their behavior. When that occurred, the children were more likely to interact with each other, to seek information, amusement, or diversion. In effect, the teacher had lessened her role as the classroom leader, and by default, allowed students greater freedom to define the situation. It is clear from their interviews that the teachers did not intend to share this leadership function with their pupils. Nonetheless, it happened, primarily because the teachers did not have well-thought-out rules and procedures, communicate these to the students, nor monitor pupil behavior closely enough.

One further aspect of overall management characterized the less effective teachers: The consequences of good behavior or inappropriate behavior were not as apparent in their classrooms nor were they delivered quickly enough. They frequently ignored problems, or issued general criticisms that did not focus on the particular offenders: "Some of my children are too noisy." They would frequently threaten or warn children, but then not follow through. One teacher issued "reminders," with an accumulation of several reminders producing a letter to the parents at the end of the week. Initially effective, the "reminders" lost their zing when the teacher failed to be consistent in administering them, allowing much of the inappropriate behavior to go untended. As a consequence of the lack of follow-through on the warnings, some children tended to push at the limits, causing further problems, and drawing the teacher's attention away from instruction.

It is easy to see how deficiencies in each of the areas of rules and procedures, monitoring, and delivery of consequences compound each other and produce a devastating net effect on overall organization and management. Uncertainty about teacher expectations is likely to lead to a wider range of pupil behavior, including some that is inappropriate or off-task. Unfortunately, lack of teacher vigilance allows the behavior to continue, which increases the likelihood of inconsistency in applying consequences. Children who are behaving appropriately or who want to do so will be less likely to be noticed and reinforced, thus reducing the clarity of the rules and procedures further. Once a few weeks have elapsed, a "system" is established and persists throughout the school year. Unlike the effective managers' systems, the poor managers' systems are more likely a product of their lack of leadership.

Instructional Management

Many of the instructional problems faced by the less effective teachers grew out of their difficulties in overall organization. Likewise, the instructional management of the better managers was facilitated by their good overall organization. Teachers in both groups used a wide variety of approaches to both reading and mathematics instruction. Some highly individualized systems for reading instruction were operated by teachers in both groups, although grouping into three or four groups and basal instruction was the most frequent mode. In arithmetic, the range of practices was from totally individualized systems, to groups, to total class instruction. In other subject areas, large group instruction was the predominant mode.

The better managers tended to have better procedures for instructional activities, just as they had for their overall classroom organization. They generally managed time well, with smoother, shorter transitions. Once finished with regular work, their pupils had other activities to keep them busy. These teachers had worked out systems for managing instruction that avoided problems. Thus, some students might be assigned the role of helper when the teacher was with a group. Directions and instructions were given clearly, and written on the board, and routines were established early. These teachers also held students accountable for their work, frequently monitoring their seatwork and keeping track of their progress on assignments. The instructional activities didn't always run like clockwork during the first three weeks, but in each teacher's class there was a sense of purpose and organization to the activities.

Less effective managers' problems were often a function of their general organization. To a degree, the curriculum aided them by providing some structure to build around. The worst instances of instructional management occurred when new teachers attempted to implement individualized instruction

occurred when new teachers attempted to implement individualized instruction systems. Their procedures were inadequate and, coupled with poor monitoring, produced frequent off-task behavior and occasional chaos. It should be noted that the teachers did not initiate the individualized systems, rather, they used them because other grade level teachers at their school had such systems. A common characteristic of these teachers was a lack of clarity in their directions for academic work, particularly seatwork. They stated instructions vaguely and did not check to see if the children understood what they were supposed to do. This resulted in off-task behavior, considerable talk with peers to find out what steps to take, and frequent interruptions of the teacher. Some of these teachers also varied their daily schedule of activities. This, along with their more poorly established procedures, ineffective monitoring, and poor delivery of consequences, resulted in a lack of predictability in these classes.

Student Concerns

An important aspect of the teacher's organization and management system is the degree to which it accommodates student concerns. We considered student concerns to be met when several conditions were satisfied. First, the classroom did not pose an apparent threat to the child's physical safety and emotional well-being. This meant that the teacher prevented children from physical attacks on each other and deterred verbal abuse, and refrained from either herself. In addition, the child should have received fair treatment from the teacher, had an opportunity to be successful, and received recognition for it. This involved having enough information to make productive use of time in the classroom. Because a poorly organized classroom is likely to result in some loss of productive time, this aspect of management is

conceptually linked with the preceding two areas, as the correlations among the narrative ratings also bear out.

The more effective managers seemed to have a sense of how children perceive the classroom. This is suggested by the way in which procedures were introduced and taught. The first procedures were ones related to the child's immediate needs: where to put the lunch box, how to use the bathroom, when and where to get a drink. The initial activities were designed to ease the child's entry back into the world of school. The organization of their classrooms made them havens of security from the sometimes rough-and-tumble school halls and neighborhood streets. The modal climate, as inferred from narratives and from observer ratings was relaxed and pleasant, but also work-oriented. Some teachers would allow occasional work breaks, perhaps to play a record, sing, or dance. Most relied on a variety of different instructional activities and assignments, along with scheduled P.E., art, and music activities to relieve the occasional tedium of the basics.

In the less effectively managed classrooms, we judged student concerns to have been less adequately met. Although no serious problems with physical security are noted during the first three weeks, there is more incidence in these teachers' narratives of verbally aggressive behavior among the children, and an occasional, potentially dangerous, incident occurs now and then. For example, in one of the lowest SES schools, a teacher used straight pins for name tags. Several students were poked with them later in the morning. (A more effective teacher in this school used tape to secure her children's tags.)

As a group, less effective managers were as equitable in their treatment of the children as the more effective managers. Similarly, these teachers did not inflict verbal or physical abuse. However, their overall organizational

style did reduce the productive time in their classes, so that they were less helpful than they might have been. In particular, they prevented their students from developing greater independence as a result of their poor directions and procedures. By not monitoring closely enough nor stopping inappropriate behavior quickly enough, they tended to promote more off-task behavior and to increase the potential for interference with the productive time available to on-task children. Finally, these teachers didn't seem as tuned in to the needs of their children. Their initial activities seem less in touch; consider the teacher who on Day One rehearsed fire drill procedures, or another who gave a difficult math ditto within the first hour of the first morning.

Constraints, Room Arrangement, and Coping

A constraint is any condition in the school, room, or environment that has the potential for interfering with the teacher's conduct of her class. The average rating of the more effective managers was not different from that of the less effective managers. However, the more effective managers were judged to have better arranged rooms and to have coped more effectively with their constraints than the less effective managers.

The range of constraints is noteworthy, and many of them were formidable. Several teachers were assigned to their school and grade level less than a week before school began, leaving little time to prepare psychologically or instructionally for the first few weeks in that setting. One teacher was assigned her room on the Friday before the first week--and it had not been cleaned. In some schools the teachers were frequently interrupted on the first day by late-arriving children and their parents, school office staff, custodians, other teachers, and calls over the intercom. Other constraints included missing books and supplies, smaller than usual classrooms, the

absence of air conditioning (in late August and early September in Central Texas), and the arrival of new students one or two weeks after the year began. In this latter case as many as five or six new students were added to several classrooms during Week 2 to allow for the shifting of teachers to accommodate unpredicted enrollment increases or decreases.

The coping strategies used by the more effective teachers evidenced several themes. First, they had procedures for coping. If new pupils were coming, helpers were appointed to acquaint them with rules and routines, and to make them feel welcome. The teacher would monitor the new students carefully at first, to get them started. In other words, a system was invoked to handle the new pupils; it was simply a part of the teacher's overall organization. By contrast, the less effective managers would welcome the children, but not supply the information about the classroom nor arrange for it. Their new students would be left more on their own to infer the rules and procedures in an already less organized setting.

A second characteristic of the more effective managers is that they were more effective planners. They thought about their potential problems before the year began and made some preparations. Foreseeing a shortage of materials, they made sure they got theirs early. Anticipating a too-small room, they moved furniture out and arranged desks to allow better movement. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the teachers did not allow the constraints to interfere with the attention they gave to their students. This was most evident in the first few days of the year when, in some schools, many interruptions occurred during class time. These teachers simply would not attend to the distraction until they had the pupils involved in some activity. They rarely left the classroom, even briefly. If they had to talk with a visitor, they conversed inside the room. Thus, these teachers allowed no

opportunity for diminution of their leadership role. In contrast, the less effective managers simply had poorer procedures for coping. They did much less in the way of anticipating and planning for problems and once those problems began to impinge on their instruction, they tended to be diverted. Thus, absence from the room and withdrawal into clerical and administrative tasks were routinely observed. Such behavior lessened these teachers' roles as effective leaders in their classrooms.

Personal Characteristics of the Teachers

No apparent differences in personal characteristics were noted between the two groups, when the narratives are searched for evidence. More effective managers were not more likely to be described as warm, enthusiastic, composed, articulate, anxious, or critical than were less effective managers during the first three weeks. It may be that the remainder-of-year narratives will reveal some differences, but they simply are not there at the beginning of the year.

The more effective teachers did exhibit better affective skills, receiving higher ratings on both listening and expressing feelings. The utility of such skills is apparent when management subcomponents include designing procedures and activities that meet student concerns and communicating teacher expectations about appropriate behavior. A good listener will be able to identify the concerns; a teacher who can express feelings will give pupils clear signals and will be more predictable.

Summary and Conclusions

Effective classroom organization and management can be predicted from the first several weeks of the school year. The teaching characteristics and behaviors that appear to discriminate best among more and less effective managers include the quality of leadership exhibited by the teacher in

managing behavior and instruction, planning for student concerns, and coping with constraints. The more effective managers had a workable system of rules and procedures which they taught to their students as a primary goal of the first several weeks. They monitored their students carefully, and did not "turn them loose" without careful directions. They did not treat inappropriate behavior differently than the less effective managers, but they stopped it more quickly. Consequences of appropriate and inappropriate behavior were clearer in their classrooms and were applied more consistently. Thus these teachers established their credibility early and they were predictable.

These results are consonant with current thinking and research about organization and management. For example, teacher monitoring would appear to be conceptually linked to Kounin's (1970) "withitness," which he found to be related to student work involvement and freedom from deviancy. Also, we note Brophy and Putnam's (1979) emphasis upon, "pro-active teacher planning and organizing and in planning and maintaining a learning environment that minimizes the need to deal with problems in the first place" (p. 183).

The present study provides additional evidence of the importance of these activities at the beginning of the year. In particular we would stress the teacher's need for having an efficient system for organizing her procedures, rules, initial activities, and treating the communication of this system to the pupils as a major teaching task at the beginning of the year. The present study indicates that such a process is likely to facilitate classroom management throughout the year.

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Table 1
Beginning-of-year and Remainder-of-year
Correlations (n = 27)

Variable	<u>r</u>
Behavior control	.83**
Instructional leadership	.74**
Student concerns	.68**
Physical arrangements	.41**
Constraints	.61**
Coping with constraints	.76**
Percent on-task (all activities)	.58**

**p < .01.

Table 2
Intercorrelations of the Narrative Ratings

Variable	2	3	4	5	6
1. Behavior Control	.84	.88	.67	.06	.75
2. Instructional Management		.78	.67	-.07	.74
3. Student Concerns			.78	-.14	.73
4. Physical Arrangements				-.51	.64
5. Constraints					-.12
6. Coping with Constraints					--

Table 3

Comparisons of the Beginning-of-year Variables for Teachers
Judged to be Good vs. Poor Managers at the End of the Year

Variable	Good Managers*		Poor Managers*		<u>t</u>	<u>p</u> <
	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{x}$	S.D.		
Managing Behavior	4.4	.53	1.4	.79	8.34	.001
Instructional Leadership	4.1	.69	1.6	.79	6.50	.001
Student Concerns	4.3	.76	1.7	.76	6.36	.001
Physical Arrangements	4.3	.76	2.6	.98	3.67	.01
Constraints	3.3	.49	3.4	1.51	.24	N.S.
Coping with Constraints	4.6	.79	2.0	.82	6.00	.001
Percent On-task	86.7	5.06	75.00	9.43	2.90	.01
Percent Off-task (unsanctioned)	7.1	2.41	16.1	9.23	2.50	.05

*n = 7

Figure 1

Outline for Summary Narratives of Teachers

(Classroom Organization Study)

- I. Behavior control
 - A. Expectations for appropriate behavior formed in advance
 - 1. Presentation of rules and procedures
 - 2. Absence of necessary rules and procedures
 - B. Clear signals
 - 1. Breaking down complex tasks
 - 2. Specific corrections
 - 3. Helping students to remember the rules
 - C. Consequences of behavior
 - 1. Teacher monitors
 - 2. Consistent reaction to misbehavior
 - 3. Response to good behavior
 - D. Dealing with the unexpected
- II. Instructional leadership
 - A. Enough interesting work to do
 - 1. Appropriate difficulty and length
 - 2. Clear explanations
 - 3. Materials ready to begin assignments
 - B. Students are held accountable
 - 1. Teacher contacts about work
 - 2. Feedback to them
 - 3. Availability of teacher for questions
 - C. Pacing of work
 - 1. Teacher vs. student control
 - 2. After-work activities
 - D. Time use
- III. Student concerns
 - A. Confusion or concern expressed about routine matters
 - B. Student level of success
 - 1. How often they do well
 - 2. Students' reasons for doing well
 - C. Student response to teacher
 - D. Degree to which basic needs of safety, security, fair treatment are met
- IV. Physical arrangement of the classroom
 - A. Crowdedness
 - B. Effect on teacher monitoring and student attention
 - C. Traffic patterns
 - D. Changes through the year
- V. Constraints on the teacher
 - A. Interruptions on a daily basis
 - B. Other problems with equipment, materials, schedules, placement of bodies
 - C. Other adults
- VI. Personal characteristics of the teacher
 - A. Basic style (and evidence for that)
 - B. Consistency of that style